

Responsive Classroom Language



Reminding Language (Before an Activity)

At School	At Home
Remind me what you will do when you have finished your lunch.	Remind me what you will do to get ready for school this morning.
What will it look like/sound like/feel like when we play this game together?	What will it look like/sound like/feel like when we shop together in Target today? (Example: We will see ourselves using smiling faces and walking feet. We will hear ourselves using

	polite indoor voices and the words “please” and “excuse me.” Our shopping trip will feel calm and fun.)
We are going to give high fives to each other for our greeting this morning. Let’s practice a gentle high five together.	I’d like for you to politely greet our family members when they arrive for Thanksgiving lunch. Let’s practice a polite greeting together.
I’m getting ready to read a story. Show me what an attentive listener looks like.	Tonight at dinner, we are going to each tell one great thing that happened today. Show me what an attentive listener looks like.
<p>“Banana!” “Split!”</p> <p>IMPORTANT! After saying “Banana!,” do not move or speak another word until every eye is on you, every hand is in the air, and every mouth is closed!!! No vocal reminders...you may want to move closer to the children who are still off track, but keep quiet and wait! This is powerful stuff!!! 😊</p>	“Banana!” “Split!”
Yesterday when we lined up to go inside, we did a pretty good job. What can we do today to make it even better?	Last time we played a board game together as a family, we did a pretty good job of being good sports. What can we do today to make it even better?

We are going to be in a new and exciting place for our field trip. What will you do to remind yourself of the rules?

We're going to a friend's house for a play date. What will you do if you feel yourself getting out of control?

Reinforcing Language (during an activity, specific, direct, make eye contact with the child being praised)

Throw in some big character words, like responsibility, independence, empathy, and cooperation!

At School	At Home
I notice that you are taking your time on this project.	I notice that you put your dishes in the sink without a reminder. That is being responsible!
I see that you found a creative solution to the problem!	I see that you found a creative solution to the problem!
I appreciate the way you are sitting criss-cross with your eyes on the speaker.	I appreciate the way that you are waiting for me to end my phone conversation to ask a question.
Wow...the blocks are lined up in rows. The	Wow...your bed is made. The books are back

markers are all back in their jars. The floor is clean. Thank you for being so helpful!	on the shelf. The floor is clean. Thank you for being so helpful!
Your hard work paid off!	Your hard work (or patience, or attention to detail) paid off!
Mistakes are okay...they help us learn!	Mistakes are okay...they help us learn!
You showed compassion when you gave your hurt friend an ice pack.	You showed independence when you put on your jacket, mittens, and shoes by yourself.

Redirecting Language (response to unwanted behavior)

Never, ever argue or try to reason with a child. The fewer words, the better. Children need security, and they need to know that rules exist to keep us safe and ensure that everyone gets to play and learn. It is so much easier for kids to remember to follow the rules if we adults respond (rather than react) consistently to both positive and negative behaviors in predictable ways.

At School and At Home

Take a break. Come back when you are ready.

That is unsafe behavior. No more tire swing today.

No thank you!

Freeze. Try that again.

Come back to me and use walking feet this time.

Stop. Remind yourself of the rule and try again.

Everybody freeze! Take three deep breaths. Let's try that again, remembering the rule this time.

You have lost the privilege of _____. We'll try again tomorrow. (Your little one will tempt you to bargain. Don't do it! ☺)